



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY &
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

EERMC FULL COUNCIL DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 19, 2023

Full Council Meeting | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Department of Administration Conference Room 2A, Providence, RI 02908 with remote participation via Zoom.

Members in Attendance: Harry Oakley, Sue AnderBois, Brett Feldman, Carrie Gill (interim RIE representative), Bob Izzo, Thomas Magliochetti, Dave Caldwell, Kurt Teichert, Priscilla De La Cruz

Others in Attendance: Marisa Desautel, Steven Chybowski, William Owen, Craig Johnson, Sam Ross, Brendan Dagher, Toby Ast, Michael O'Brien Crayne, Adrian Caesar (virtual), Lee Gresham (virtual), Brian Mehler (virtual), Nancy Chafetz (virtual), Spencer Lawrence (virtual), Ann Clarke (virtual), Angela Li (virtual), Joanna Detz (virtual), Rachel Sholly (virtual), Pete Falcier (virtual), Sara Sultan (virtual), Carlos Millan (virtual), Daniel Tukey (virtual), Mark Siegal (virtual), Samantha Caputo (virtual), Karen Verrengia (virtual), Jordan Galluzzo (virtual), Jeremy Newberger (virtual)

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Oakley called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

2. Chair Report

Chairperson Oakley delivered the chair report with participation instructions for the meeting. He also noted that the Council had received an online public comment from the Northeast Clean Energy Council on the Rhode Island Energy System Reliability Procurement Plan. He then provided an overview of the agenda flagging the focus on program oversight on the energy efficiency (EE) plan and its cost effectiveness, the Consultant Team's efforts to gather comments for pre-filed testimony to submit in the regulatory docket, and a presentation by Lee Gresham on the natural gas demand response pilot program. Chairperson Oakley also reminded Council Members about the LEAD Session scheduled for October 30th.

3. Executive Director Report

Mr. Chybowski delivered the executive director report on behalf of Acting Commissioner Kearns. Mr. Chybowski shared updates regarding the Rhode Island Energy RFP issued to procure offshore wind and the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) approval of funding for initiatives including the Office of Energy Resources' (OER) Drive EV

program.

4. Meeting Minutes – September 28, 2023

Chairperson Oakley motioned to approve the September 28 Meeting Minutes. Council Member Teichert seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

5. Program Oversight (65 Minutes, 3:10 – 4:15 p.m.)

a. Rhode Island Energy Presentation and Discussion on 2024 Equity Goals and Metrics (20 min, 3:10 – 3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Dagher from Rhode Island Energy presented on the Company's incorporation of Equity Working Group (EWG) recommendations into the Company's Plan filings. Chairperson Oakley commented that the Council had already voted to endorse the Plans without the full delivery of the equity metrics and commitments. Mr. Dagher noted that there were roughly 70 areas of focus identified by the EWG, and future meetings would involve closer review and scrutiny of the metrics. Mr. Dagher pointed to the state's leadership on equity spending according to the ACEEE 2022 scorecard, the support RIE offers for income-eligible customers, and the opportunities to leverage funding for pre-weatherization barriers using state and federal funding.

Mr. Dagher continued that the Company's 2024 equity efforts would include coordination with the State's Health Equity Zones, additional residential outreach, coordination with the federal Justice40 initiative, outreach through Spanish radio stations, as well as coordination of Inflation Reduction Act funding. Chairperson Oakley asked what equity success looked like in 2024, and Council Member Teichert asked whether the 2024 metrics were currently included. Mr. Ross provided context outlining that the EWG report was filed as an addendum to the EE plan, including what metrics the company currently could report on, and that Council discussion could focus on what metrics should be adopted for future plans. Council Member AnderBois expressed the Council's desire to see what metrics were included and to understand the rationale for metrics that will not be included.

Mr. Dagher presented on the EWG's recommendations, including the participation barriers particularly around low-and-moderate-income residents and proposed actions to address them. These actions include focusing on increasing outreach in five designated "Equity Communities" and offering energy assessments in four additional languages, among other process improvements.

Mr. Dagher laid out the timeline for how the Company planned to meet the commitments through the remainder of 2023 and iterate on the metrics and reporting in 2024 through next year's planning process, with delivery of the first Equity Metrics Report in Q3 of 2024. Chairperson Oakley addressed the timeline, noting the effort should be moved up a quarter to better align with the planning effort for the 2025 plan.

b. Presentation and Vote on the Cost-Effectiveness Report for the 2024-2026 Three Year Plan and the 2024 Energy Efficiency Annual Plan (15 min, 3:30 – 3:45 p.m.)

Mr. Johnson from the Council's Consultant Team presented on the 2024 Energy Efficiency Plan Cost-Effectiveness Report for the 2024-2026 Three Year Plan and the 2024 Annual Plan. This report included the Consultant Team's analysis of the Plans

compared to the cost of additional supply, how the program portfolios met the cost-effectiveness standard, how the new LCP standards impacted the analysis, and how the interstate system benefits impact the electric portfolio more than the gas portfolio.

Council Member Teichert motioned to approve the cost-effectiveness report as currently written and to direct the Consultant Team to submit the report to the PUC by the October 23, 2023 deadline. Council Member Izzo seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

c. Review and Potential Vote on Council Efficiency Plan Comment Letter (15 min, 3:45 – 4:00 p.m.)

Mr. Ross of the Consultant Team presented a draft of a comment letter to be filed with the Public Utilities Commission as pre-filed testimony to highlight efficiency plan areas for further consideration. His presentation began with an overview of the regulatory process, the regulatory calendar, the required Council pre-filed testimony on its budget, and intervenor testimony to raise particular issues for the Commission's attention. Suggested areas of focus for this testimony include equity, workforce development, and the comparison of planned savings goals to Council-recommended targets.

Mr. Ross and Mr. Caesar reviewed the Council's concerns regarding workforce development, savings deviations between the Plans and the Council's targets, and additional opportunities for continued program improvement. Mr. Ross provided a comparison of planned savings to targets and the recommendation of a bottom-up assessment of the incremental savings through additional budget allocations. Council Member Caldwell asked what workforce development programming was being cut with the decrease in spending, and Council Member Feldman noted that the Company would provide that information as it was also a question posed by the DPUC.

Council Member Teichert motioned to approve the content of the comment memo as provided by the Consultant Team and to direct the Consultant Team to submit the Council's comments as pre-filed testimony during the 2024-2026 EE Plan regulatory review. Council Member AnderBois seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

d. Rhode Island Energy Presentation and Vote on the System Reliability Procurement 2024-2026 Three-Year Plan (15 min, 4:00 – 4:15 p.m.)

Ms. Gill from Rhode Island Energy presented a final overview of the 2024-2026 Three-Year System Reliability Procurement (SRP) plan for the Council's consideration. She reviewed the Least-Cost Procurement Standards for SRP and noted that this document is a process plan and that SRP investment plans would be filed separately. Mr. Ross commented that the RIE responses to stakeholder comments was very clear and thorough.

Council Member Teichert motioned to endorse the 2024-SRP Plan as presented to the Council and allowing for non-substantive changes, such as typos, to be done prior to filing. Council Member Izzo seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

e. *Presentation and Potential Vote on Rhode Island Energy's 2024 Gas Demand Response Pilot Program Proposal (15 min, 4:15 – 4:30 p.m.)*

Mr. Ross let the Council Members know about the vote options available to the Council regarding SRP investment proposals, which does not mandate a vote of endorsement.

Mr. Gresham presented on RIE's gas demand response pilot SRP proposal which is currently designed to serve commercial and industrial customers. The Plan is being filed before the electric demand response plan to ensure continuity of the gas program this winter. The Company is hoping to increase program enrollment and is targeting Aquidneck Island for this program expansion. In 2025, the Company may look to expand the programming to residential customers in the ConnectedSolutions program as well.

Mr. Ross and Mr. Johnson looked to provide clarity to the Council around the Least-Cost Procurement language that now states that the Council "may" determine its endorsement on SRP Proposals and that the Council may determine whether they would like to vote to endorse a plan proposal or not.

Council Member Teichert motioned to endorse the Rhode Island Energy Gas Demand Response Pilot System Reliability Procurement Investment Proposal as presented today. Council Member Izzo seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

6. Council Business (10 Minutes, 4:30 – 4:40 p.m.)

a. *Planning Discussion for the Council's Learning, Education, and Advancement Discussion (10 minutes, 4:30 – 4:40 p.m.)*

Mr. Ross reminded the Council Members of the upcoming Learning, Education, and Advancement Discussion (LEAD) Session and previewed the three primary topics on the meeting agenda.

7. Public Comment

Emily Koo, The Acadia Center

Ms. Koo provided two comments to the Council. She first posed a question as to how the outcomes of the Future of Gas docket could play a role or influence gas demand response proposals. She then commented that while the Company's equity presentation today focused on the recommendations of the EWG, the Company did start to address how they plan to incorporate some of these recommendations in their last EWG meeting. She noted that the work has already begun and that there is a need to advance that work to the next step with reporting.

8. Adjournment

Council Member Teichert motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:03 p.m. Council Member Izzo seconded. All in favor, none opposed.